

The Wednesday of Mid-Pentecost

After the Saviour had miraculously healed the paralytic, the Jews, especially the Pharisees and Scribes, were moved to envy and persecuted Him, and sought to slay Him, using the excuse that He did not keep the Sabbath, since He worked miracles on that day. Jesus then departed to Galilee. About the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles, He went up again to the Temple and taught. The Jews, marveling at the wisdom of His words, said, "how knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" But Christ first reproached their unbelief and lawlessness, then proved to them by the Law that they sought to slay Him unjustly, supposedly as a despiser of the Law, since He had healed the paralytic on the Sabbath.

Therefore, since the things spoken of by Christ in the middle of the Feast of the Tabernacles are related to the Sunday of the Paralytic that is just passed, and since we have already reached the midpoint of the fifty days between Pascha and Pentecost, the Church has appointed this present feast as a bond between the two great Feasts, thereby uniting, as it were, the two into one, and partaking of the grace of them both. Therefore today's feast is called Mid-Pentecost, and the Gospel Reading, "At Mid-feast"—though it refers to the Feast of the Tabernacles—is used.

It should be noted that there were three great Jewish feasts: the Passover, the Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Passover was celebrated on the 15th of Nissan, the first month of the Jewish calendar, which roughly coincides with our March. This feast commemorated that day on which the Hebrews were commanded to eat the lamb in the evening and anoint the doors of its houses

with its blood. Then, having escaped bondage and death at the hands of the Egyptians, they passed through the Red Sea to come to the Promised Land. It is also called "the feast of Unleavened Bread," because they ate unleavened bread for seven days. Pentecost was celebrated fifty days after Passover, first of all, because the Hebrew tribes had reached Mount Sinai after leaving Egypt, and there received the Law from God; secondly, it was celebrated to commemorate their entry into the Promised Land, where also they ate bread, after having been fed with manna forty years in the desert. Therefore, on this day they offered to God a sacrifice of bread prepared with new wheat. Finally, they also celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles from the 15th to the 22nd of "the seventh month," which corresponds roughly to our September. During this time, they lived in booths made of branches in commemoration of the forty years they spent in the desert, living in tabernacles, that is, in tents (Ex. 12:10-20; Lev. 23 LXX).

Dismissal Hymn. Plagal of Fourth Tone

AT Mid-Feast give Thou my thirsty soul to drink of the waters of piety; for Thou, O Saviour, didst cry out to all: Whosoever is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. Wherefore, O Well-spring of life, Christ our God, glory be to Thee.

*Kontakion. Fourth Tone
Thou Who wast raised up*

O SOVEREIGN Master and Creator of all things, * O Christ our God, Thou didst cry unto those present * at the Judaic Mid-feast and address them thus: * Come and draw the water of * immortality freely. Wherefore, we fall down before * Thee and faithfully cry out: * Grant Thy compassions unto us, O Lord, * for Thou art truly the Well-spring of life for all.

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Icon of Ss. John the Theologian and Gregory Palamas

Courtesy Holy Nativity Convent Brookline, Massachusetts 02445



IN WISDOM HAST THOU MADE THEM ALL

**TUESDAY OF THE
FOURTH WEEK
VESPERS**

For Lord, I have cried, we allow for six verses and chant to following three Stichera, repeating them:

*Fourth Tone
O Lord, when thou didst ascend*

THREE is come now the middle of those days * which commence with Christ God's saving Rising and which are sealed * by Pentecost, that divine day. * Illuminated by both the feasts and joining both, * it is radiant and also * is now rendered majestic, * manifesting and showing the presence of * the great glory of the Ascension of our Master, Christ. (*Twice*)

SION heard and rejoiced when it received * the glad tidings of Christ's Resurrection from Hades' realms. * And all of her faithful offspring * were filled with joy on beholding Him Who by the grace * of the Spirit doth wash away * all the stain of Christ's murder. * It doth prepare to celebrate festively * the joyous Mid-festal and holy day of both the feasts. (*Twice*)

THE bountiful pouring forth of the Divine * Spirit upon all is now at hand, as the Scripture saith. * This is proclaimed by the mid-point * of the blest period after Christ God's death * and His burial and rising, * when He gave His disciples * His unfailing and true promise, which revealed * and showed forth most clearly the coming of the Comforter. (*Twice*)

Glory: both now. *Plagal of Second Tone*

AS we come together on the Mid-feast between Thy Resurrection and the divine coming of Thy Holy Spirit, O Christ, we praise the mysteries of Thy wonders. Wherefore, on this day do Thou send down Thy great mercy unto us.

OIKOS

WITH the streams of Thy Blood do Thou water my soul, which is grown dry and barren because of mine iniquities and offenses, and show it forth to be fruitful in virtues. For Thou didst tell all to draw nigh Thee, O all-holy Word of God, and to draw forth the water of incorruption, which is living and which washeth away the sins of them that praise Thy glorious and divine arising. Unto them that know Thee as God, O Good One, grant from on high the strength of the Spirit, which verily was bourne by Thy disciples, for Thou art truly the Well-spring of life for all.

The Synaxarion of the Menaion, then the following:

On the Wednesday of the Paralytic, we celebrate the Feast of Mid-Pentecost.

Verses

Standing in the midst of the teachers,
Christ the Messiah teacheth at Mid Feast.

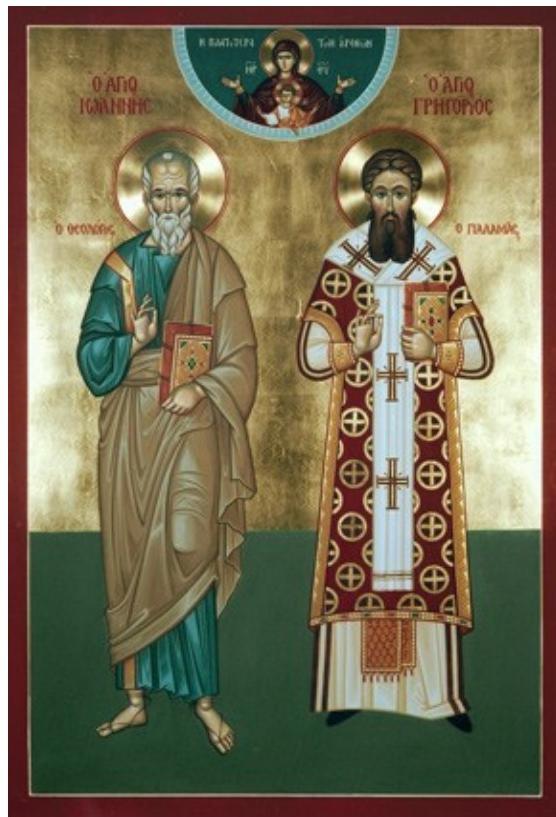
By Thy boundless mercy, O Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

EXAPOSTOLARION

Third Tone

Thou, Who, as God, adornest

O THOU that hast the wine-bowl * of gifts which never empty out, *
vouchsafe that I may draw water * unto remission of my sins. * For with
great thirst am I taken, * O God of love and compassion. (*Twice*)



**Saint John the Theologian, Apostle and Evangelist
Beloved Virgin Disciple of the Lord, and
Saint Gregory Palamas Archbishop of Thessalonica.
Patron Saints of the Holy Transfiguration
Monastery, Boston, Massachusetts.**